

EK 86-0546X

Office of Legislative Liaison
Routing Slip

TO:	ACTION	INFO
1. D/OLL		X
2. DD/OLL		X
3. Admin Officer		
4. Liaison		
5. Legislation		X
6. Ch/Liaison		X
7. DCh/Liaison		X
8.		
9.		
10.		

SUSPENSE

Date

Action Officer:

Remarks:

13 Feb 86
Name/Date

STAT

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIA I
ROUTING SLIP

TO:

		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X		
2	DDCI		X		
3	EXDIR		X		
4	D/ICS				
5	DDI		X		
6	DDA				
7	DDO		X		
8	DDS&T				
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/OLL		X		
14	D/PAO		X		
15	D/PERS				
16	VC/NIC				
17	C/LA/DO		X		
18	D/ALA/DI		X		
19	C/CATE/DO		X		
20	NIO/LA		X		
21					
22					

SUSPENSE _____ Date _____

Remarks

Executive Secretary

12 FEB 86

Date

3637 (10-81)

ROBERT H. MICHEL
18TH DISTRICT, BANGOR

H-232, THE CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
225-0500

Office of the Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Executive Registry

86-0546X

February 11, 1986

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It would appear from press accounts that there is considerable confusion over our position regarding renewed assistance for the Nicaraguan Democratic resistance or "Contras". We want to make sure you understand that we believe the Administration should seek Congressional approval for the resumption of military aid to the Freedom Fighters in Nicaragua, and to urge that everything possible be done by the Administration to increase public understanding of, and support for, this policy.

The current situation in Nicaragua is of grave concern to us. It is clear that there are thousands of Nicaraguans prepared to take up arms against the Soviet-Cuban supported regime in Managua. But their efforts have been limited by a lack of supplies and professional training. For nearly two years now the Congressionally-imposed Boland restrictions have prevented agencies in the U.S. government from providing any kind of military assistance to the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters. During this same period of time, the Communist regime in Managua has been the recipient of vast amounts of Soviet and Cuban military assistance, including sophisticated equipment and thousands of advisers. Mr. President, the most dedicated freedom fighters in the world cannot fight Soviet MI-24 helicopters with "humanitarian" supplies of boots and bandages. The Contras need a substantial amount of military assistance now. The Humanitarian Aid Program which expires at the end of March has had no appreciable effect on the course of the conflict in Nicaragua.

We are especially disturbed by the growing evidence of direct Cuban involvement in the conflict. Counter insurgency battalions of the Communist-Sandinista Army are well supplied with Cuban advisers down to the company level, and there is considerable evidence of direct Cuban involvement in combat. Meanwhile, our own U.S. government personnel are prohibited from even giving advice on military operations to the Freedom Fighters.

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We continue to receive evidence that the Communist regime in Managua is actively engaged in efforts to destabilize and subvert governments in neighboring countries in Central America. Weapons used in the recent assault by M-19 guerrillas on the Colombian Supreme Court have been traced to Managua, and in December, Honduran officials intercepted a shipment of ammunition, explosives, and sophisticated communications gear intended for the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador.

We have seen a stepped-up program of repression inside Nicaragua directed at stamping out the last vestiges of democratic opposition to the imposition of Communist rule. Civil liberties have been further restricted, and there has been an increase in restrictions aimed at the Catholic Church and Cardinal Obando Y Bravo. In our opinion, the commandants ruling Nicaragua today are engaged in an all out effort to eliminate their opponents thereby consolidating their hold on Nicaragua and laying the groundwork to expand their policies of terror and subversion throughout the region.

Finally, Mr. President, we see no indication that the Communist government of Nicaragua is serious about seeking a negotiated settlement to the conflict. On the contrary, they appear to view negotiations as a way to stall for time to eliminate their opponents, while trying to lull public opinion throughout the hemisphere into believing that they are really just social reformers instead of dedicated Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries, building a base for future Soviet-Cuban subversion.

In light of the above, Mr. President, we urge you to adopt the following course of action:

1. Submit to the Congress a request for substantial amounts of military assistance to the armed democratic resistance or "Contras". Ask for sufficient aid to achieve the Administration's objectives of forcing the government of Nicaragua to live up to its 1979 promises of pluralism, democracy and non-aligned status, coupled with an end to efforts aimed at subverting their neighbors.

2. Recommend an end to the "Boland Amendment" type restrictions prohibiting CIA involvement with the Freedom Fighters. Agency personnel are best equipped by virtue of training and experience to provide the Freedom Fighters with the advice and training they need to meet the Cuban-supported Nicaraguan communist forces on equal terms.

3. Continue diplomatic efforts. We applaud Secretary Shultz's recent meeting with the Contadora Foreign Ministers; but do not let demands for further negotiations serve as an excuse for doing nothing to help the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters. Many of our colleagues in the Congress who are urging further

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negotiations would not support aid to the Freedom Fighters under any circumstances. Going along with their request for delay merely plays into the hands of the Communist regime in Managua and puts at risk the very survival of the armed and unarmed democratic resistance.

4. Finally, we urge you to make a major personal commitment to the effort to explain to the American people why this course of action is necessary. We believe your effective and articulate presentation of the reasoning behind the Reagan Doctrine of supporting anti-communist insurgencies is crucial to persuading the nation and the Congress to support successful policy in Central America.

Mr. President, we realize the course of action we have recommended is not an easy one. It will require a major effort from all of us if it is to succeed. We know that it is possible that Congress may reject military assistance. Nonetheless, we think it is essential that we fight for a policy we believe in; one which offers some prospect for success in Central America, rather than acquiesce once again to continuing Democratic intransigence.

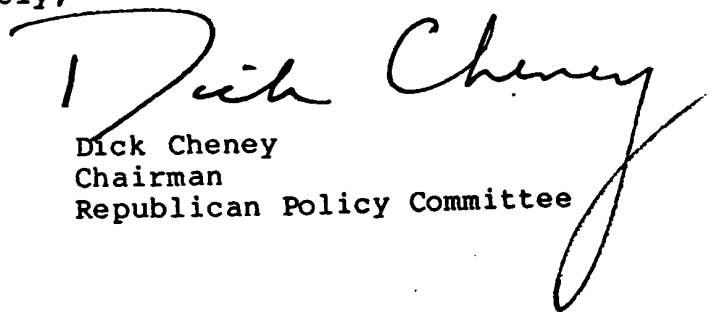
It is not in the national interest to pursue a policy that is doomed to fail on the grounds that it was all that Congress would allow. If the Communists and their Soviet-Cuban allies are going to be successful in Nicaragua, let the record show that it was the direct result of the unwillingness of Democratic Members of Congress to support the Administration's request for military assistance to the anti-Communist insurgency.

A major struggle and debate over this issue will serve to educate the American people about the nature of the challenges we face around the world; and greater public awareness and understanding will lay the groundwork for an effective U.S. policy of support for freedom loving anti-Communist insurgency because it is morally right, and in our strategic interest to do so.

Sincerely,



Robert H. Michel
Republican Leader



Dick Cheney
Chairman
Republican Policy Committee

cc: The Honorable Donald T. Regan
The Honorable John M. Poindexter

DC: td